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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/667,654	09/23/2003	Christophe Chau	PET-2078PI	9117
23599	7590	10/29/2007	EXAMINER	
MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C. 2200 CLARENDON BLVD. SUITE 1400 ARLINGTON, VA 22201			BOS, STEVEN J	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1793				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
10/29/2007		PAPER		

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/667,654	CHAU ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Steven Bos	1793

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 July 2007.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-10 and 15-20 is/are pending in the application.
  - 4a) Of the above claim(s) 13 and 14 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-10 and 15-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
    1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 10/453867.
    3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's election with traverse of claims 1-10 in the reply filed on July 25, 2007 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the restriction requirement is contingent on the allowability of claims 1-10 and the joinder of other claims in the Preliminary Amendment since they are dependent thereon. This is not found persuasive because the dependent claims 13,14 are still drawn to a patentably distinct gas separation process.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-10,15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, "the formation of a gel or a solution" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 1, "the crystallization of the zeolite" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 1, "the elimination of residual agents" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 1, "stage (a)" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 1, "stage (c)" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 2, "stage (a)" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 3, "stage (a)" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 4, "stage (c)" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 6, "stage (a)" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 8, "MFI-structural type" is indefinite due to the word "type."

In claim 10, "the temperature" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 16, "the crystallization time" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 16, "MFI-structural type" is indefinite due to the word "type."

In claim 18, "the crystallinity" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

In claim 19, "the crystallinity" lack(s) proper antecedent basis in the claim(s).

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1-10,15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chau '495 or Anstett '263 or Anstett '427.

Chau, Anstett '263 and Anstett '427 each suggests the instantly claimed process of making a supported zeolite membrane including ranges of the molar ratio of water to silica, the time and temperature of crystallization which are within or overlap those instantly claimed but may differ in that the crystallinity is not stated. See the abstract, cols. 3-6 and example 1 of Chau; and the abstract and examples of each Anstett reference.

Because the taught process is the same as that instantly claimed each would form the zeolite membrane having the instantly claimed crystallinity as well as n-butane permeance.

The subject matter as a whole would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to select the portion of the prior art's

range which is within the range of applicant's claims because it has been held to be obvious to select a value in a known range by optimization for the best results, see *In re Boesch*, 205 USPQ 215.

The subject matter as a whole would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have selected the overlapping portion of the range disclosed by the reference because overlapping ranges have been held to be a *prima facie* case of obviousness, see *In re Malagari*, 182 USPQ 549.

Any difference imparted by the product by process limitations would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made because where the examiner has found a substantially similar product as in the applied prior art the burden of proof is shifted to the applicant to establish that their product is patentably distinct not the examiner to show the same process of making, see *In re Brown*, 173 USPQ 685, *In re Fessmann*, 180 USPQ 324, *In re Spada*, 15 USPQ2d 1655, *In re Fitzgerald*, 205 USPQ 594 and MPEP 2113.

Claims 9,10,17,20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barri '664 or Lai '650 or Deckman '366 or Anthonis '457 or Verduijn '289 or Vroon et al.

Each of Barri, Lai, Deckman, Anthonis, Verduijn and Vroon suggests the instantly claimed supported zeolite membrane but may differ as to the process of making. See the abstract of each.

Any difference imparted by the product by process limitations would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made because where the examiner has found a substantially similar product as in the applied prior art the burden of proof is shifted to the applicant to establish that their product is patentably distinct not the examiner to show the same process of making, see *In re Brown*, 173 USPQ 685, *In re Fessmann*, 180 USPQ 324, *In re Spada*, 15 USPQ2d 1655, *In re Fitzgerald*, 205 USPQ 594 and MPEP 2113.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven Bos whose telephone number is 571-272-1350. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9AM to 6PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stan Silverman can be reached on 571-272-1358. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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Steven Bos  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1793

sjb